

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

May 16, 2001

LB 536A

think proponents who were able to get the committee to do what they wanted used the existence of the gluten tax as part of that, but also because of its General Fund implications. And I feel, as somebody who gave what I think was a critical vote, disappointed, I think would be a fair word, that the forces who got me to vote "yes" with the existence of the gluten tax I think are now yielding to the increasing political pressure of the Wehrbein amendment, and that disturbs me on a process front. But on a substantive front it does have to do with General Fund implications, and I had leapt to the conclusion that the gluten tax being taken out would increase General Fund implications. Senator Wehrbein, I'd be interested in having you tell me where that assumption might be false.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Now the proposed amendment reduces General Fund to \$2.5 million, then ultimately to \$2.4 million a year. It takes the gluten tax out and it reduces the gallonage amount from 20 cents to 18 cents, and then it spreads it out over 8 years instead of 7. The total hit on the General Fund is about \$2 million less. There is no gluten tax and there is a equally fair tax on corn, five-tenths for two years, four-tenths for six. But it does reduce the General Fund commitment in total.

SENATOR LANDIS: Okay. The existence of the gluten tax I thought was a good idea, but I will say that it had to do with the General Fund implications. I'll reflect on that, because it seems to me that I am most uncomfortable with the prospect of the Revenue Committee having been told one story and then the proponents and people who came to my office and said, gosh, we need to do this for XYZ, and the committee put the bill out and I voted* for that on one basis and now it's about to be changed, not with...not because some new force has forced it, but because the new force has taken the proponents and has...and have, I think, undermined their commitment to the bill as it is. And now those forces are coalescing and they will ultimately change the bill that they very carefully got the votes necessary to get it out of committee for them, and since I was one of those votes I'm a little sensitive on this score. It seems really close to bait and switch to me, but I will look at the amendment in a different light because of its General Fund implications, and I will reflect on that, and that will give me time to think.